

# Policy Paper **26**

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## No more excuses: Provide education to all forcibly displaced people

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No child should have to pay the cost of war, to be kept away from the classroom because of conflict. Yet whole generations of refugee children from countries like Syria, Afghanistan, Palestine and South Sudan have had to leave their homes and schools. But they do not leave their dreams of a better future for themselves and their countries, a future only possible through education.

It is unacceptable that just half of refugee children have access to primary education and one quarter have access to secondary education. It is unacceptable that girls are nearly always the first to miss out. Education is every child's basic human right.

Dreams should not end because of conflict. Futures should not be put on hold because of war. There is no tomorrow for countries affected by conflict unless their children learn today, and not just the basics, but an education that gives them the tools and skills they need to fly.

World leaders have promised to provide every child with a full 12 years of education by 2030. Young people displaced by war are not the exception. Humanity should know no borders. There are solutions, as this paper shows, but the world must come together and make good on its promises. We know what we have to do.

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*This paper, jointly released by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and the Global Education Monitoring Report in advance of the World Humanitarian Summit, shows that the education rights of forcibly displaced populations are being neglected on a large scale. It calls for countries and their humanitarian and development partners to urgently ensure that internally displaced, asylum seeking and refugee children and youth are included in national education plans, and collect better data to monitor their situation.*

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In 2015, the number of forcibly displaced people in the world reached its highest level since the end of the Second World War. The complex educational needs of people forced to flee their homes are being neglected, compromising the future of entire generations: refugee children are five times more likely to be out of school than non-refugees.

This policy paper shows why it is crucial that three key education issues are tackled:

- The right of forcibly displaced people to education is being neglected on a wide scale, and efforts to redress this situation face significant challenges. Among refugees, only 50% of children are in primary school and only 25% of adolescents are in secondary school. Access to quality education should be provided to all internally displaced and refugee children and youth from the onset of an emergency and into long-term displacement.
- Countries and their humanitarian and development partners must urgently ensure that internally displaced, asylum seeking and refugee children and youth are included in national education plans, and collect better data to monitor their situation.

Financial resources need to be carefully channelled to ensure good quality education for forcibly displaced people. As well as widening access to formal education through inclusion of refugees in national education systems, these resources should be used to enable accelerated and flexible forms of education, provide trained teachers, and ensure that appropriate curricula and teaching languages are used.

Almost 60 million people were in forced displacement in 2015, the highest number since 1945 (UNHCR, 2015a). These include internally displaced people (IDPs), asylum seekers and refugees, a small percentage of whom are resettled. At the same time, forcibly displaced people are spending longer and longer in displacement and exile, compromising prospects of durable solutions and reinforcing the urgency of a sustainable, comprehensive response by governments and the international community.

Education is a priority for displaced people. All children and young people need and deserve good quality education, which is a recognised human right. For children and youth who have been forcibly displaced, education is especially

important: by simply being in school, they are better protected from trafficking, illegal adoption, child marriage, sexual exploitation and forced labour — both immediately after displacement and long term. Education also builds knowledge and skills for self-reliance and resilience. It can also contribute to peace and security and mitigate factors that led to conflict and displacement in the first place.

## FORCIBLY DISPLACED POPULATIONS — UNDERSTANDING THE DIFFERENT CATEGORIES

There are important differences among groups of forcibly displaced people that inform their legal, economic and education rights. In order to provide targeted policy recommendations, the following legal definitions have been used (UNHCR, 2015b):

- **Internally displaced person:** An individual forced to flee from his/her home or place of habitual residence, who has not crossed an internationally recognized state border.
- **Asylum seeker:** A person seeking international protection whose claim for refugee status has not yet been determined.
- **Refugee:** A person who, owing to well-founded fear of persecution for one of a number of specific reasons contained in the 1951 Refugee Convention, is outside the country of his/her nationality, and is unable or unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of that country.
- **Refugee in protracted situations:** A refugee in a long-term state of displacement; for UNHCR, a protracted refugee situation is one in which a large number of refugees of the same nationality have been in exile for several years in a given asylum country.
- **Stateless persons:** A person who is not considered as a national by any State under the operation of its law (1954 Convention on the Status of Stateless Persons). Not all stateless persons are displaced. While some people are born stateless, others become stateless over the course of their lives.

While there are three major causes of forced displacement — conflict, natural disaster and infrastructure development — this paper concerns people displaced by conflict.

Education for internally displaced people and refugees has gained wide support in several recent global level resolutions and frameworks, including the Incheon Declaration (§11) and the Education 2030 Framework for Action (§57). These documents acknowledge that Sustainable Development Goal 4 (“Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning”) cannot be achieved without meeting the education needs of vulnerable populations, including refugees and internally displaced people. Target 4.5 calls on countries to ensure equal access to all levels of education for vulnerable groups.

Within this broader context, the first World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016 aims to build a more inclusive humanitarian system, placing people’s safety, dignity and the right to thrive at the heart of global decision-making (Box 1). A new proposal is expected that will aim to bridge the shortfall in financing of good quality education for displaced people. This paper describes the magnitude of the challenge and sets out key policies to guide the use of these increased resources and partnerships.

### BOX 1

#### World Humanitarian Summit offers an opportunity to raise awareness on education for displaced people

In 2012, the United Nations Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon, called for a World Humanitarian Summit to take place in 2016. In preparation for the summit, he issued a report titled *One Humanity: Shared Responsibility*, a vision of how the global response should be reorganised. The report sets an agenda with five core responsibilities. Education features prominently under the third responsibility, to leave no one behind: “Countries should review and adapt their national policies, legislation and budgets to provide displaced persons, and their host communities with better services and economic opportunities, including on ... education” (§89).

This message is bolstered by the finding that parents and children identify education as “one of their highest priority concerns” (§100). The report calls for “sufficient domestic and international funding” to end a situation of persistently low allocations: over the last three years, expenditure did not exceed US\$200 million, but the humanitarian funding gap was at least US\$2.3 billion. As a result, a new financial platform is being launched at the World Humanitarian Summit with the aim to resolve fragmentation, improve coordination, and raise more funds.

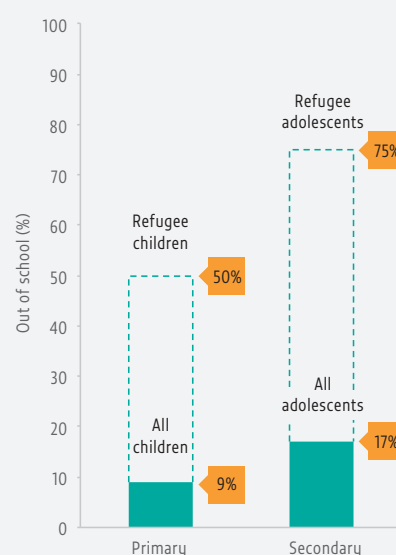
## Refugee education is uneven and limited

By mid-2015, there were 15 million refugees under the global mandate of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) — 5 million more than in 2010 (UNHCR, 2015a). In Egypt, Niger, South Sudan, the Syrian Arab Republic and Uganda, the percentage of refugees who are children exceeded 60% (UNHCR, 2015b).

Data remain limited for many refugee situations, but the most recent UNHCR data estimates that worldwide, 50% of primary school age refugee children are out of school and 75% of adolescent refugees at secondary education level are out of school. Refugee children and adolescents are five times more likely to be out of school than their non-refugee peers (Figure 1).

Two aspects of refugee situations have important implications for education planning: many refugees are displaced for very long periods, and the large majority of refugees are hosted in developing countries.

**FIGURE 1:**  
Globally, refugee children and adolescents are five times more likely to be out of school  
Primary and secondary level out-of-school rates, global averages (2013) and refugee populations (2014)



Note: The out of school rate for all adolescents refers to those of lower secondary school age (approximately 12–14 years), while the out of school rate for refugee adolescents refers to all those aged 12–17 years.

Source: Analysis based on the 2014 UNHCR data; UNESCO Institute for Statistics database.

The average length of exile in 33 protracted situations was 25 years at the end of 2014, nearly three times as long as in the early 1990s (Milner and Loescher, 2011; UNHCR, 2015b). This means that for a large number of refugees, education planning has to go beyond short-term emergency provision and be sustained over several years articulating with development plans.

At the same time, despite the visibility of the refugee influx in Europe, 86% of all refugees are hosted in developing countries. Among the major refugee-hosting countries in mid-2015 were Ethiopia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Jordan, Lebanon, Pakistan and Turkey (UNHCR, 2015a). Some of these host countries have weak education systems and limited capacity to support new populations. Moreover, refugees are often concentrated in the most educationally deprived regions of host countries, including Iraqi and Syrian refugees in poor areas of Jordan, Syrian refugees in south-eastern regions of Turkey, and Sudanese refugees in eastern Chad.

Behind the global average number of refugee children out of school, there are significant differences among countries. Primary enrolment rates average 80% in selected refugee sites in Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Yemen but only 43% in Pakistan and 56% in Ethiopia.

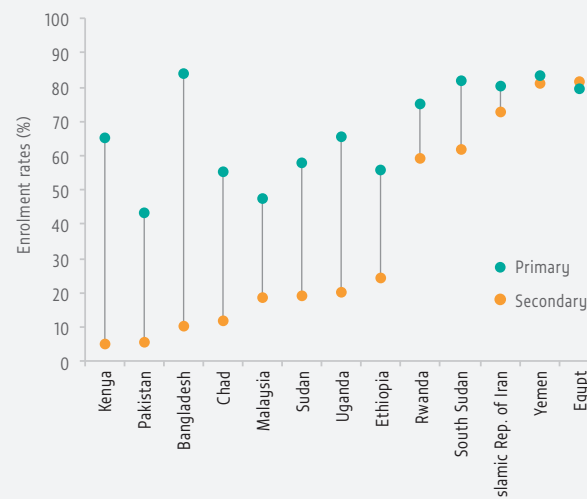
Access to secondary education is particularly limited for refugees in many countries. In Kenya, Pakistan and Bangladesh, less than 5% of adolescents aged 12 to 17 were enrolled in secondary education (Figure 2). In many refugee camps, secondary education services meet a fraction of the demand. In the Dadaab refugee camps in Kenya, there are 33 primary schools but only seven secondary schools, running at double their capacity to accommodate just 13% of the adolescent population (UNHCR, 2015c).

### Refugee sites have had varied success in meeting education needs

Since the mid-2000s, education for refugee children has progressed in some countries but stagnated in others, as is shown by new analysis of data from nine refugee sites (Figure 3). A range of factors contribute to this wide divergence in access to education and education quality, including differences in refugees' rights to education and certification according to national legislation, the difficulty in dealing with large influxes of displaced people, language differences, and the difficulty of sustaining education in protracted refugee situations.

**FIGURE 2:**

**Education conditions for refugee children vary widely**  
Primary and secondary enrolment rates, selected refugee sites in selected countries, 2014

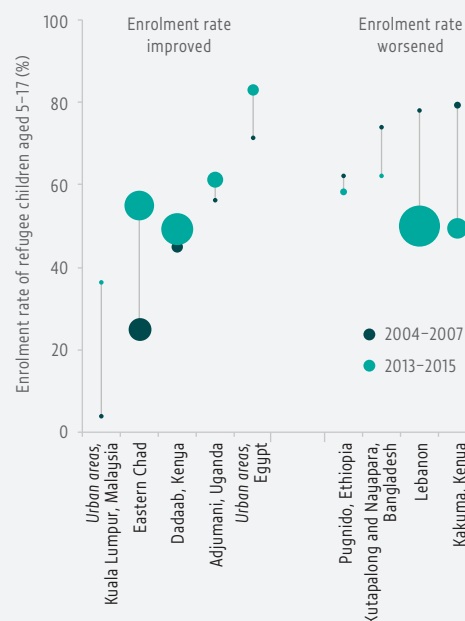


Source: Analysis based on 2014 UNHCR data.

**FIGURE 3:**

**Different sites in different contexts have followed different trajectories in getting refugee children and adolescents into schools**

Enrolment rates of refugee children aged 5-17, selected refugee sites in selected countries, 2004-2007 and 2013-2015



Note: The size of the marker is proportional to the size of the population in each site.

Source: Analysis based on 2014 UNHCR data.

Stateless persons often figure highly among refugee populations, as is the case in Bangladesh and Malaysia where the refugee population comes largely from the Rohingya community. This places refugees at a double disadvantage, with many children and young people unable to enrol in school, register for exams or receive certification. Malaysia has achieved significant reductions in its out-of-school populations of refugees from the prolonged instability in Myanmar. In urban areas across Kuala Lumpur, the capital, enrolment rates increased from 4% in 2006 to around 40% in 2014. This increase has largely been due to the establishment of learning centres by community groups, faith-based organisations, foundations and NGOs, as refugee children and adolescents in Malaysia are not provided with free primary education in public schools. This parallel education system leaves children completing primary education without recognised certification, depriving them of options to continue their education (UNICEF, 2015a, 2015b).

In some countries, the sheer numbers of refugees have overwhelmed efforts to get refugee children and adolescents into school. The influx of Syrian refugees has increased Lebanon's population by more than 25% (Culbertson and Constant, 2015). New analysis for this paper shows that this has further strained an already overstretched education system. Between 2007 and 2014, the total number of registered refugee children and adolescents aged 5 to 17 in urban areas increased from 1,600 to 180,000. Even with the introduction of double-shift systems that accept one set of students early in the morning and another set in the afternoon and evening, and an increase in enrolment of 80% since 2013, the proportion of refugee children who are enrolled stood at only 50% in 2014.

In Eastern Chad, the unrest in neighbouring Sudan's Darfur region has spilled across the border, along with hundreds of thousands of Sudanese refugees. The region also hosts many refugees from the Central African Republic and Nigeria. Despite a continued and significant growth in the school age refugee population, enrolment rates have increased remarkably, from 25% in 2006 to 55% in 2014. Several initiatives have been mounted to try to lower the barriers facing refugee children. These include curriculum transition reform to integrate refugees into the national curriculum, adequate training of refugee teachers, and certification of refugee students' attainments (UNHCR, 2015d, 2016a).

In protracted refugee situations, education providers find they can make progress in some areas but face

persistent difficulties in others. One of the oldest and largest protracted refugee situations is that of Palestinians displaced over successive phases of a conflict that stretches back to 1948. Almost five million Palestinian refugees registered with the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) live in Jordan, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic, as well as Gaza and the West Bank. In 2015, UNRWA provided education to around half a million Palestinian children in its primary and lower secondary schools. In Gaza, where UNRWA runs a total of 257 schools, more than 95% of school age children were found to attend school in the 2015–2016 academic year (UNRWA, 2015). Moreover, across UNRWA schools, there are comparable proportions of boys and girls enrolled at the primary and secondary education levels (UNDP, 2015).

Most children in UNRWA schools perform as well as, or better than, those in host country schools in Jordan, Gaza and the West Bank (Abdul-Hamid et al., 2016). But early childhood provision remains limited (except at schools in Lebanon): in Gaza and the West Bank, only 38% of eligible children (or 85,200 children) were enrolled in pre-school education in 2011 (ANERA, 2014; Palestine Ministry of Education and UNICEF, 2012). Moreover, most UNRWA schools operate only up to grade 9. While students are entitled to join the secondary school systems in their host countries, many have trouble making the transition (Thirkell, 2016).

### *Educational opportunities remain limited for refugees living outside camps*

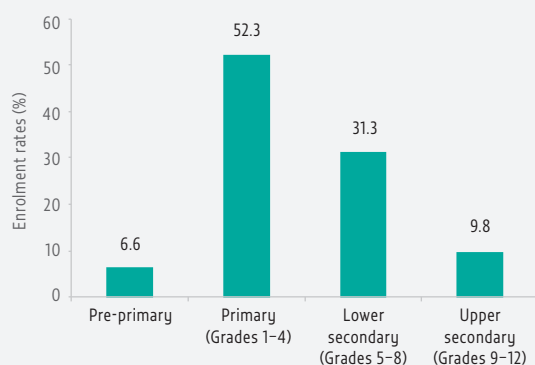
Existing refugee education data comes largely from camps and camp-like settings. Yet the traditional image of life in tented, sprawling camps tells less than half of the refugee story. More than half of the world's refugees reside in urban areas (UNHCR, 2015b). While the right to choose where they will live increases opportunities for livelihoods, individual growth, social cohesion and solutions for refugees during displacement, monitoring and evaluation of these refugees' education becomes problematic when they are included in national schools as they frequently are not identified as refugees in national education accounts. Consequently, much less is known about the education status of those refugees, though there are typically high concentrations of refugees in informal settlements characterised by high levels of deprivation.

In Jordan, for instance, 83% of around 630,000 Syrian refugees live outside of camps (Jordan Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, 2015). Since 2012,

under UNHCR's Home Visits Programme, interviews have been conducted with more than 170,000 Syrian refugee households in non-camp settings to examine their living conditions. In 2014, only 53% of school age children were enrolled in formal education, though this was an increase from 44% in 2013 (UNHCR, 2015e). The government painted a similar picture, indicating that 100,000 school age Syrian children missed formal education in 2014, almost 50% of those living outside camps (Jordan Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation, 2015).

Another striking example comes from Turkey, host to almost 3 million registered Syrian refugees. As of late 2015, almost 700,000 Syrian refugee children and adolescents aged 6 to 17 needed access to education (3RP, 2016a). Around 85% were scattered outside camps in towns and cities. The percentage of refugee children enrolled in formal education was over 85% in camp settings but only 30% in urban areas. Overall, enrolment rates were 7% in pre-primary education, 52% in primary education, 31% in lower secondary education, and 10% in upper secondary education (**Figure 4**) (Turkey Ministry of Education, 2016). A 2013 survey of 2,700 households conducted in the camps and out of the camps yielded similar results. In the 10 cities with the highest proportion of Syrian refugees, about 83% of children in the camps were found to attend school compared with only 14% of those living out of the camps (Turkey AFAD, 2013).

**FIGURE 4:**  
In Turkey, few Syrian refugee children receive pre-primary education  
*Enrolment rates of Syrian refugee children and adolescents, by level, 2015*



Source: Turkey Ministry of Education, 2016.

## Internal displacement severely undermines education

The number of internally displaced people (IDPs), like the number of refugees, has been growing. At the end of 2014, 38 million IDPs were estimated to live in 60 countries, an increase of 15% since 2013. The Democratic Republic of Congo, Iraq, Nigeria, South Sudan and the Syrian Arab Republic account for 60% of IDPs (IDMC, 2015). Internal displacement is predominantly urban, with IDPs often having fled from conflict-affected areas to the relative safety of towns and cities, as in Colombia and in Northern Uganda.

Reliable data on the educational needs of IDPs, especially those not in camps, is even more limited than for refugees. Despite IDPs being nationals of their country and hence coming under the responsibility of their government, data on IDPs is seldom included in educational management information systems and is left to international players to collect. Therefore, they tend to remain a relatively invisible group, even though they constitute the largest group of all forcibly displaced populations. But available evidence indicates that, in many conflict-affected countries, internal displacement has put huge strains on already inadequate educational infrastructure.

In Nigeria, for instance, violent attacks on civilians by Boko Haram have since 2009 left widespread devastation in the northeast of Nigeria, with approximately 2 million IDPs (IDMC, 2014a). By early 2016, an estimated 952,029 school-age children had fled the violence (HRW, 2016). The International Organization for Migration (IOM)'s Displacement Tracking Matrix reported that in 19 out of 42 displacement camps in six states, children did not have access to any formal or non-formal education facilities in June 2015 (IOM, 2015).

In Iraq, the conflict between armed groups and government forces has escalated rapidly and resulted in around 3 million IDPs as of 2014 (IDMC, 2015). At the end of the academic year in July 2015, only 32% of internally displaced children and adolescents had access to any form of education, which left about 600,000 of them missing an entire year of schooling. The enrolment rate of the 78,000 IDP children and adolescents aged 6 to 17 living in camps stands at only 45%. The situation for 730,000 IDP children and adolescents not in camps is even worse, with only 30% having access to education. In Dohuk Governorate, 63% of children had missed 6 to 12 months of schooling and 11% had lost over a year of learning (OCHA, 2015a).



In Yemen, where over 400,000 school age children were among the 2.3 million IDPs in 2015, armed conflict and insecurity forced many people living in Zinjibar and Khanfar to flee to Aden and Lahj governorates (OCHA, 2015b). A survey of school age IDP children in Lahj governorate found that only one-third were enrolled in school (Yemen Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation and UNICEF, 2014).

## Forced displacement situations reinforce the marginalisation of girls

People who are already frequently marginalised, such as girls, are often the worst affected by losses in opportunities for schooling in refugee and IDP situations.

Refugee girls are less likely to finish primary education, transition into and complete secondary education. Displacement weakens children's protective environments and families can resort to coping mechanisms that disadvantage girls, including child labour and child marriage. In Kakuma camps in Kenya, in 2015 only 38% of primary school students were girls (UNHCR, 2015f). In South Sudan's Unity State, only 40% of primary school refugee students in 2015 were girls (UNHCR, 2015g).

In Pakistan, child marriage and teenage pregnancy are often cited as major barriers to the continuation of education for Afghan refugee girls, particularly to secondary level. Many girls are taken out of school to be married, as early as grade six. Dropout rates for refugee girls are as high as 90% (UNHCR, 2015h).

Girls and women, 70% of the world's internally displaced population, tend to be out of school at higher rates and have lower literacy rates than boys and men of comparable ages (IDMC, 2014b). In Iraq, school attendance are low for all displaced students, but more so for internally displaced girls. For example, in Najaf governorate, 81% of 15- to 17-year-old girls were out of school compared with 69% of boys of the same age (REACH 2014).

Literacy rates tend to be lower amongst IDP women. Only 1% of IDP women living in urban centres in Afghanistan were found to be literate versus 20% of IDP men (World Bank and UNHCR 2011) and in the Central African Republic literacy rate for women aged 15–24 is close to 59% compared with 72% for young men of the same age (IDMC, 2014b).

## Educational management information systems are vital to monitor forcibly displaced populations

Data collected by governments, the Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre (IDMC), UNHCR and NGOs provide useful insights but also highlight the scale of information gaps surrounding education for forcibly displaced people. Collecting data on enrolment rates of forcibly displaced groups is far from easy. Without accurate data on population movements, demographics of displaced population groups and education service provision, planning is not possible. These groups are effectively invisible in national education sector plans, and hence their education receives little or no budget allocation.

Capturing IDP education data is particularly challenging because education management information systems (EMIS) generally collect data once a year and cannot therefore accurately capture information on sometimes transient populations. Moreover, governments may be party to conflicts and, as a result, exclude displaced persons from their figures or focus only on capturing education data in camps. One exception is the government of Ukraine, which collects education status information on children displaced from the conflict in Crimea, Donetsk and Lugansk on a monthly basis. As of March 2016, 51,000 displaced children (or 1.4% of the total student population) were enrolled in schools in other areas (Ukraine Ministry of Education and Science, 2016).

Information systems have been often slow to respond to refugee situations. It is difficult to monitor refugee children's enrolment, retention and learning in national systems where education data is not disaggregated to account for these vulnerable groups. These monitoring challenges are expected to increase with more refugees being included in national education systems and hence included in EMIS but without their legal status as refugees being registered. With this being the preferred approach in order to protect refugees and limit the risk of discrimination, a certain degree of parallel monitoring on refugee-specific vulnerability and protection aspects needs to be maintained.

Some countries have taken steps to better monitor refugees' education status. Chad developed an integrated system to improve refugee education data management, with the aim of eventually integrating the data in the national EMIS. The system, developed as an offline spreadsheet tool, includes a set of data collection forms for

each camp, covering preschool, primary, middle and high school, as well as non-formal literacy programmes and higher education. Quality of data has improved, ensuring harmonised data collection, entry and compilation (UNHCR, 2016a).

In Malaysia, refugees are not allowed to access the formal education system but instead attend community learning centres spread across Kuala Lumpur. UNHCR has mapped these centres to improve monitoring of enrolment, attendance and performance. A generic and open source online system was applied to 40 centres, which can now input data independently, improving the coverage and quality of education macro and micro data for this dispersed urban refugee population. Its use has led to more accurate data management, facilitating education programme design, implementation and monitoring (UNHCR, 2016b).

## Policies to improve education for forcibly displaced children and youth

To provide quality education to IDPs and refugees, decision makers and education providers need to contend with a very diverse set of challenges for groups that differ considerably in their circumstances and needs. Creating the right policy and implementation environments requires time and strong partnerships between governments and humanitarian and development agencies.

However, ultimately, responsibility and decision-making belongs to states. That is why countries must take the initiative to include refugee, internally displaced, asylum seeking and stateless populations in their national education plans. They need to respond in a flexible way to strengthen and expand the formal education system in order to absorb displaced children and youth and also to provide certified accelerated education programmes that are accredited as well as non-formal options that have pathways into the formal education system.

This subsection advocates four main policy directions for governments and their partners:

- Enshrine forcibly displaced people's rights to education in national laws and policy
- Include displaced children and youth in national education systems

- Enable accelerated and flexible education options to meet diverse needs
- Ensure an adequate supply of trained and motivated teachers

### *Enshrine forcibly displaced people's rights to education in national laws and policy*

The level of protection of IDP, refugee and stateless children depends on national laws and their implementation. Yet in many countries, these groups face institutional barriers that can directly and indirectly harm these children's prospects of receiving an education.

Bangladesh and Malaysia, for instance, are not parties to the 1951 Convention on the Status of Refugees or its 1967 Protocol, so they lack administrative and legislative frameworks to deal with refugees, and refugee children are excluded from formal education (UNHCR, 2011, 2013). Some countries have discriminatory legal frameworks. In Egypt, Sudanese and Syrian children may access the national education system but refugees from other countries are barred from public schools (3RP, 2016b; Ullah, 2014).

Only 21 of the over 50 countries who have internally displaced persons referenced IDP children in national laws and policies (Brookings Institute, 2016; Elizabeth G. Ferris, 2010).

Colombia, whose population of IDPs — over 6 million — is one of the world's largest, has demonstrated that legal provision can extend opportunities (IDMC, 2015). In 2004, having determined that the government's provisions fell short of its obligations, the Constitutional Court issued a ruling that led to the development of a national plan for IDPs. Under the law, displaced children are eligible for free education and schools must accept them without requiring previous proof of education (Espinosa, 2009). These enhanced entitlements are believed to have contributed to an increase in the proportion of internally displaced 5- to 17-year-olds attending school from 48% in 2007 to 86% in 2010 (UNESCO, 2011).

### *Include forcibly displaced children and youth in national education systems*

In most refugee situations, emergency education provision is insufficient to meet the needs of children and communities, particularly as displacement is tending to become more protracted. Refugee children



and youth require access to safe, accountable, certified education services; in most cases, inclusion of refugees in national education systems is the most sustainable option. To ensure education quality, inclusion requires early and sustained attention from national authorities and development partners to enhance national capacity and infrastructure, provide conducive legal and policy frameworks, adopt appropriate curriculum and language of instruction, and prepare refugee students and communities for the transition to host country education.

Where inclusion is not carried out, the use of parallel education systems following the curriculum of the country of origin presents significant challenges, especially lack of access to examinations and certification — leaving children unable to continue their education. In Thailand, tens of thousands of refugee children have been educated in camps on the Myanmar border using a curriculum that is recognised by neither the Thai nor the Myanmar governments. This leaves them unable to continue schooling in Thailand, and equally unable to access schools upon return to Myanmar (Sawade, 2007).

Some refugee communities may understandably resist inclusion, even if it is in the best interest of educational quality, because they may take it as a sign that repatriation is not imminent. This requires active advocacy activities to explain the advantages of the transition to the communities. Such advocacy was carried out in Chad, for example, where Sudanese refugee students had originally been enrolled in a parallel system that followed the Sudanese curriculum but did not benefit from national teacher development or school resources. A transition to the Chadian curriculum and exam system initiated in October 2014 was preceded by a participatory assessment and a sensitisation and awareness raising programme (UNHCR, 2015d).

In Rwanda, a conducive legal and policy framework allows free access to national education services. In three older refugee camps, such services are provided up to the end of lower secondary school through a mix of camp-based provision and integration of refugee children in local government schools. Full integration with government schools is taking place in two newer camps and is in progress in the new Mahama camp, which hosts 48,000 refugees from Burundi. However, access to upper secondary education is either unavailable or limited (less than 5% of eligible students) (UNHCR, 2016c; UNICEF, 2016).

One of the challenges of inclusion in national education services can be the language of instruction. When the

language in host countries differs from the language that the refugees speak or are familiar with, instructional programmes that use rigorous second-language teaching methods are essential. Teachers also need intensive training on how to support second-language acquisition and learning. In Turkey, UNHCR will implement a large-scale European Commission project that will support the development of intensive Turkish-language support programmes to facilitate enrolment and retention of Syrian refugees in Turkish schools, provide training for teachers on the effects of displacement on learning, and introduce initiatives to promote social inclusion (3RP, 2016a).

A common obstacle to inclusion is the lack of infrastructure. A low-cost solution to classroom shortages is the use of a double-shift system. In Lebanon, during the school year 2015–16, Syrian children are attending 1,278 public schools alongside Lebanese children, while another 259 schools offer a specially designed second shift in the afternoon to accommodate more Syrian children (UNHCR, 2015i). However, the approach can pose problems as the same teachers often teach both shifts and report being overworked (Dryden-Peterson and Adelman, 2016). It can also undermine the provision of good quality education and learning outcomes (Woods, 2007).

### *Enable accelerated and flexible education options to meet diverse needs*

**Accelerated education programmes can provide refugee and IDP children and adolescents with a viable option for certified education.** Among both internally displaced and refugee populations, there are large numbers of over-age learners who have missed significant periods of schooling. When over-age children return to school, there is not only a risk of overcrowding classrooms and difficult teaching conditions with multiple age ranges, but there are also considerable protection risks in mixing older and younger children in one class. Certified accelerated education programmes are a key way to allow older children and adolescents to access condensed primary education services in conditions appropriate for their age.

Accelerated education programmes need to be carefully designed, however, to maximise opportunities for graduation and for students to continue on to formal secondary education. An evaluation of accelerated education programmes for IDPs administered by the Norwegian Refugee Council found that reintegration rates into formal education varied considerably. A tracer

study in Angola found that even among those who had qualified for re-entry at the end of the programme, half did not reintegrate, usually because of the costs involved (Shah, 2015).

To overcome such constraints, a programme in Puntland, Somalia, provided conditional cash transfers, while it also collaborated with schools to waive the fees of students who reintegrated. As a result, 99% of graduates reintegrated, but the cost of the programme was not sustainable and the programme was eventually discontinued (Shah, 2015). A careful balance needs to be struck between incentives and cost-effectiveness.

Building on good practice, in 2014, UNHCR initiated an Accelerated Education Working Group with United Nations and NGO partners to strengthen norms and standards for accelerated education programmes globally.

**Flexible post-primary education can provide youth with skills.** IDP, refugee and stateless communities face several barriers in obtaining accessible and suitable post-primary education opportunities. In particular, they may lack foundation skills, live in areas that are underserved by the formal education system, and may not be able to cover the costs of their education.

The Norwegian Refugee Council's Youth Education Pack offers a one-year, full-time intensive course that trains 15- to 24-year-olds in literacy and numeracy skills, livelihood skills geared toward self-employment, and various life skills. It has been implemented in 13 countries, ranging from Afghanistan to Timor-Leste. At the end of the course, graduates receive a start-up kit to help them set up a micro-business (Women Refugee Commission, 2015).

The Skills 4 Life project in Kakuma, Kenya, promotes development of market-oriented, flexible and low-cost skills development in 12 technical areas. The programme is directed at 500 unemployed youth from both the camp population and the host community. This helps ease tensions between the two groups, as the host population may be worse off than the refugees, who are more likely to receive support from the international community (SDC, 2015).

**Refugees need assistance to enter higher education.**

Higher education opportunities for refugees have historically been extremely limited with less than 1% of

refugee youth able to access universities (UNHCR, 2015b). Interrupted education, learning gaps, language, confusing application procedures, lack of accreditation of local programmes, distance from education opportunities, and costs are among the challenges that need to be overcome.

Scholarships are a key tool to encourage access. The German government-funded DAFI (German Academic Refugee Initiative Albert Einstein programme) supported more than 2,200 students across 41 host countries with higher education scholarships in 2014 (UNHCR, 2016d). The number of Syrian refugee students accessing higher education doubled between 2014 and 2015, with new programmes opening in Lebanon and Turkey thanks to an expansion of the donor base, including the Saïd Foundation (UNHCR, 2014).

Increasingly, distance and e-learning are also used, blended with on-site tutoring, providing students with certification from an accredited institution. Prominent examples include the Jesuit Commons: Higher Education at the Margins (JC:HEM) programme, which operates in places such as Dzaleka camp, Malawi, and Amman, Jordan; Borderless Higher Education for Refugees in Dadaab camps, Kenya, and InZone (University of Geneva) in Dadaab and Kakuma camps, Kenya. Initial results from these programmes are promising, and pathways ahead suggested by reviews include facilitating entry into full degree programmes and integrating with other related programmes to maximise resources (Crea, 2016).

In many countries, asylum seekers have difficulties registering at universities due to legal and/or cost barriers and are often considered overseas students subject to higher fees (Refugee Council, 2013). Refugees frequently face similar difficulties, and the rising cost of tertiary education and related costs such as books and language classes also serve as barriers (Refugee Support Network, 2012). In some cases, advocacy at national level results in refugees being admitted under the same conditions as local students, as is the case for example in Cameroon, Iran, Mozambique, Kenya, Rwanda and Turkey. There is a need for initiatives that provide more comprehensive support, such as Canada's WUSC Student Refugee Program, which removes all access and initial cost barriers to higher education through peer-to-peer sponsorship of refugees from camps directly into university and college campuses (Ferede, 2014).

## Ensure an adequate supply of trained and motivated teachers

IDPs and refugees need trained, supported and motivated teachers but all too often their teachers are poorly paid and inexperienced, and work in demanding conditions with little opportunity for professional development. Governments and their partner agencies need to ensure not only that sufficient funds are available to pay teachers appropriately but also that teachers are able to advance in their careers.

For teachers who have been volunteering for years, incentive pay can be a welcome change. In 2015, more than 4,000 Syrian refugee volunteer teachers in Turkey began to receive monthly incentive payments of €130–190 funded by donors, which has increased their morale and sense of professional value (European Commission, 2015).

In refugee camps, qualified teachers are often not available. For example, in the Dadaab camps in Kenya, about 10% of teachers are qualified Kenyan teachers, the remaining 90% being refugee teachers drawn from the camps, only 2% of whom are qualified (Dryden-Peterson, 2011). Several international NGOs provided new teacher recruits with 5 to 14 days of induction training. However, these workshops lacked a common framework identifying the basic knowledge and skills teachers should be expected to demonstrate. To address this, a teacher management and development strategy for 2013–2015 recommended a shift towards school-based development and problem-solving. The strategy also proposed qualification and certification options for teachers who meet minimum higher education admission requirements, as well as options for the majority who do not meet the requirements (UNESCO, 2014).

By creating a sense of normality and stability, teachers can provide a protective barrier from violence and conflict for traumatised children and youth. However, programmes are needed to prepare teachers for this role. The International Rescue Committee's Healing Classrooms programme builds teachers' skills to act as agents of child protection. Over 800 teachers have completed the training in northern Iraq (International Rescue Committee, 2016).

Even high income host countries face shortages of qualified teachers in the face of unprecedented numbers of asylum seeking and refugee children entering their

school systems. Following the high number of asylum applications in 2014 and 2015, Germany recruited 8,500 language teachers and has an immediate need for an extra 20,000 classroom teachers (Kauffmann, 2016).

One of the challenges facing these countries is that refugees and resettled persons who could work as teachers may be unable to provide evidence of qualifications. In 2007, the Supreme Court of Ontario, Canada, set an important precedent by ruling that the Ontario College of Teachers must find a way to assess the qualification of a resettled refugee who could not produce an original government-certified proof of her academic qualifications (Medic, 2007).

## Conclusion

As new resources are pledged to support education for forcibly displaced people, we need to be clear about how to use them. Enshrining displaced people's right to education in national laws and policies is an important first step. Including refugee children and youth into national education systems is the most sustainable way of answering their needs. In some contexts, where there are high numbers of children and young people who have missed out on schooling, accelerated and flexible forms of education may provide a viable way forward. In all cases, an adequate supply of trained and motivated teachers is vital.

This paper has drawn on a wide range of sources to paint a global picture of the education needs of IDPs and refugees. We show that those needs are complex, pose many challenges — and are often neglected. But we also demonstrate that many solutions exist, and that many countries and their development partners are cooperating to pursue those solutions with determination and ingenuity.

References for this paper are available at the following link: <https://en.unesco.org/gem-report/sites/gem-report/files/NoMoreExcusesReferences.pdf>

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